

ON THE

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R E A S O N S

FOR EXPECTING THAT

VIRTUOUS MEN

SHALL MEET AFTER DEATH

IN A STATE OF

HAPPINESS.

BY

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REASONS

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NO person who ever makes any serious reflections, can avoid wishing earnestly to be satisfied, Whether there is a future state? And if there is, What expectations he ought to entertain with respect to it, and by what means his happiness in it must be secured?

There are many arguments which lead us to conclude, in answer to the first of these questions, that we are indeed designed for another state. And there are also many which at the same time prove, that the practice of virtue must be our best security in all events, and the most likely method to secure happiness through every possible future period of our duration. True goodness is the image of the Deity in our souls; and it is not conceivable that it

should not recommend us to his particular regard, or that those who practise it should not be always safest and happiest. On the supposition of a future world, nothing offers itself more unavoidably to our thoughts than the notion, that it will be a state in which present inequalities will be set right, and a suitable distinction made between good and bad men.

It must however be owned, that this subject, as it appears to the eye of unassisted reason, is involved in much darkness. That in the future state all men shall receive an *adequate retribution*, we may in general know; but, had we nothing to guide us besides natural light, we could not go much further on any sure grounds, or give a satisfactory reply to several very interesting inquiries.

The consideration, particularly, of ourselves as *guilty creatures*, would raise doubts in our minds; and these doubts would not be lessened but increased by reflecting, that under the divine government, happiness is connected with virtue, and punishment with vice. The fact, that virtue will be rewarded, does not by any means determine what such virtue as ours may expect. The virtuous among mankind are to be considered as *penitent sinners*, and what peculiar treatment the cases of such may require, or how far repentance might avail to break the connection established by the divine laws between sin and misery, would not, I think, be clear to us.

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HERE then the aid of the christian revelation comes in most seasonably, and gives us the most agreeable information. It furnishes us with a certain proof from fact of a future state, and shews to our senses the *path of life* in the resurrection and ascension of *Jesus Christ*. It *assures* us, that repentance will be available to our complete salvation, and that all virtuous men shall be rewarded with a blessed and glorious IMMORTALITY. At the same time, it teaches us to consider this as the effect, not of the ordinary laws of the divine government, but of a particular interposition in our favour, and a love to man in *Jesus Christ* which *passes knowledge*.

But it is not my present purpose to insist on these things. The reality of a future state, as it is discoverable by reason, and as it has been confirmed and explained by the christian revelation, must be now taken for granted. The design of this discourse is only to offer a few thoughts on one particular question relating to it, which, though not of the *highest*, is yet of *some* consequence. I mean the question, "How far we have reason to expect, that "we shall hereafter be restored to an acquaintance "with one another, or again see and know one "another."

There are probably but few who have felt what it is to be deprived by death of persons they loved; whose thoughts have not been a good deal employed on this point. What, on such occasions, we must

desire *chiefly* to know is, that our friends are happy ; but it is unavoidable to inquire further concerning them with some anxiety, whether we are likely ever to see them again. It would be dismal to think of a departed friend or relative, that “ He is gone from “ us for ever, that he exists no more to us.” But virtuous men have no reason for any such apprehensions : And one of the unspeakable comforts attending the belief of a future state, arises from the hope it gives of having our friendships perpetuated, and being re-united in happier regions to those whom we have loved and honoured here. I am well satisfied that this is a very rational hope ; and in order to shew that it is so, I shall beg leave to offer the following observations.

Let it be considered first, what effect our future recollection of those who are now dear to us, is likely to have upon us. We have great reason to believe, that all the scenes of this life will, in the future life, be presented to our memories, and that we shall then recover the greatest part, if not the whole of our present consciousness. The scriptures teach us this in a very striking manner. It is not therefore to be doubted, but that we shall hereafter have a distinct remembrance of our virtuous friends and kindred ; and this remembrance, one would think, must be attended with some revival of particular regard, and have a tendency to draw us to one another, as far as it will be possible or proper.

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It will, I know, be objected to this, that our attachments to relations and friends are derived from instincts which have been planted in us to carry on the purposes of the present state, and which must cease intirely hereafter. This is, undoubtedly, in some degree true. Every instinctive determination, which respects only the exigencies of the present life, will cease with it. But does it follow from hence, that we are likely hereafter to be left as indifferent to those who are now our relations and friends, as if we had never known them? This would be a very wrong conclusion. The natures of things render it scarcely conceivable, that the recollection of those valuable persons with whom we now have connections, (of valuable parents, for example, who had the care of us in our first years, and have brought us up to virtue and happiness,) should not, in every future period of our duration, endear their memory to us, and give us a particular *preference* of them, and inclination to seek their society. Many of the distinctions, which we make in our regards between some and others, are derived from reason and necessity; and this seems to be the case in the present instance. We are, perhaps, apt sometimes to carry our notions too far of the difference between what we now are, and what we shall be in the next stage of our being. It would be absurd to suppose, that we shall hereafter want all particular desires and propensities. Benevolence,

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curiosity,

curiosity, self-love, the desire of honour, and most of our more noble and generous affections, will not decrease but grow as the perfection of our intellectual nature grows: And even our present social *instincts* may leave effects on our tempers which may produce an everlasting union of souls, and lay the foundation of sentiments and desires which shall never be lost.

But these observations, I am sensible, are not directly to the present purpose. What affords the plainest evidence on this subject, is the following consideration. There is great reason to believe that virtuous men, as beings of the same species who have begun existence in the same circumstances, and been trained up to virtue in the same state of trial and discipline, will be hereafter placed in the same common mansions of felicity. It is groundless and unnatural to imagine, that after passing through this life, they will be removed to different worlds, or scattered into different regions of the universe. The language of the scriptures seems plainly and expressly to determine the contrary. They acquaint us, that mankind are to be raised from the dead *together*, and to be judged *together*; and that the righteous, after the general resurrection and judgment, are to be taken together to the same heavenly state, there to live and reign with Christ, and to share in his dignity and happiness. When, in the epistle to the Hebrews, (chap. xii. 22, 23, 24,) we

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are said, in consequence of the clear discoveries made by the gospel of a future state, to be, as it were, already come to the *city of the living God, to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect*: it is plainly implied, that we are to join the general assembly of just men and of angels in the realms of light, and to be fixed in the same mansions with them.

The state of future reward is frequently, in the New Testament, described under the notion of a city, that is, a community or society. It is likewise very often called a *kingdom*; the *kingdom of God*, and the *everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. The great end of Christ's coming into the world was to lay the foundation of this kingdom, by saving men from the effects of guilt, delivering them from sin and death, and uniting the virtuous part of them under one perfect and everlasting government in the heavens. 'Tis said of the true disciples of Christ, that * *because he lives, they shall live also*; that they shall hereafter *appear with him in glory*: that he is now *entered for them into heaven as their forerunner*; that he is there *preparing a place for them*, and that he will soon *come again to take them to himself, that where is, there they may be also, beholding his glory*. This account is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that those who

* John.

shall partake of the future reward of virtue are to be dispersed into different parts of the universe, and scarcely leaves us any room to doubt on the present question. For, is it possible, that we should be happy hereafter in the same seats of joy, under the same perfect government, and as members of the same heavenly society, and yet remain strangers to one another? Shall we be together with Christ, and yet not with one another? Or shall we lose one another in *that multitude which cannot be numbered**, of those who have been rescued by him from destruction, and who will follow him to his everlasting kingdom? Being in the same happy state with our present virtuous friends and relatives, Will they not be accessible to us? And if accessible, Shall we not fly to them, and mingle hearts and souls again? I am very sensible, that a great deal of what the scriptures say of the future state is accommodated to our present imperfect ideas, and must not be understood too literally. But if, in the present instance, it means any thing, it must mean as much as implies what I am pleading for.

In order to give some further evidence on this point, it will not be amiss to desire, that the following passages of scripture may be attended to.

The Thessalonians, a little before St. Paul wrote his first epistle to them, had, it seems, lost some of their friends by death. In these circumstances, he

* Rev. vii. 9.

exhorts them not to *sorrow like others who had no hope*, because they might conclude certainly, from the death and resurrection of Jesus, that those who *had slept in him, God would hereafter bring with him*. He tells them *by the word of the Lord*, or, as from immediate revelation, that a period was coming when Christ would descend from heaven *with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God*; and when the friends they had lost should be raised from the dead, and, together with themselves, *should be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and to live for ever with him*. 1 Theff. iv. 13, 14, &c.

But what I have in view is more distinctly asserted in the 2d chapter of this epistle, verse 19th. *For what is our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus at his coming?* 'Tis most plainly implied in these words, that the apostle expected to see and know again his Thessalonian converts at Christ's second coming. The same remark may be made on his words in 2 Cor. iv. 14. *knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and present us with you*. And also in 2 Cor. i. 14. *As you have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even so ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus*.

Having made these observations to shew, that we may with reason entertain the expectation of joining

one another hereafter ; I shall now beg leave to give myself free scope in imagining and representing the happiness with which it will be attended. It is scarcely possible for any person not to look upon this, as one most agreeable circumstance in the future state of felicity. It has a tendency to render the contemplation of another world much more delightful. The hope of it rises up unavoidably in our minds, and has generally, if not always*, accompanied the belief of a future existence. Nor does there appear the least reason why we should hesitate here a moment, or refuse falling in readily with the natural and common apprehensions of mankind. Without dwelling therefore any longer on the evidence for this point, let us recollect some of the particular circumstances which will contribute towards rendering the future junction of virtuous men joyful.

One of these circumstances will be the remembrance of their present connections with one another. For men to meet men in the heavenly society ; for beings to join one another hereafter, who have begun their existence on the same planet, felt the same fears, and undergone the same discipline, must

* *O præclarum diem, cum ad illud divinum animorum concilium satumque proficiscar ; cumque ex hac turba et colluvione discedam ! Proficiscar enim non ad eos solum viros de quibus ante dixi, sed etiam ad Antonem meum, quo nemo vir melior natus est, nemo pietate præstantior, &c. Cicer, de Senectute.*

be the cause of pleasure. What then will it be for *friends* to meet *friends*, and *kindred* to meet *kindred*? What will it be, after obtaining a complete conquest over death, to be restored to those who are now dear to us as our own souls, and to whose example and instructions we are, perhaps, indebted for the highest blessings? With what delight will the pious parent meet his children, the husband the wife, and the master his family? How will many good men, now of opposite sentiments, rejoice to see one another in bliss, and to find those errors corrected and those silly prejudices removed, which here keep them at a distance from one another? How will the faithful clergyman rejoice with those of his flock who have profited by his labours, and whom he has been the means of reclaiming from vice, or improving in goodness? What congratulations and mutual welcomings, may we suppose, will then take place between all virtuous friends? How agreeable will it be to review together the conversations which they have with one another in this state of darkness, and to recollect and compare the scenes they now pass through, the doubts that now perplex them, the different parts they now act, and the different temptations and trials with which they struggle? Are such views and reflections all visionary? Surely they are not. If there is indeed to be that future junction of the worthy among mankind, which I have pleaded for, they are sufficiently

warranted, and must offer themselves to every considerate mind.

Another circumstance which will contribute to the joy we shall have in meeting one another hereafter, will be our reflection on the common danger we shall have escaped. We are told in the plainest terms by the mouth of divine wisdom, that all who do wickedly shall be doomed to *that everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels; and that broad is the way, and wide the gate that leadeth to destruction, and that many there be who go in thereat.* Every person, therefore, who shall hereafter attain to happiness, will be one escaped from great danger. And can it be imagined, that the remembrance of this will have no tendency to enhance the satisfaction attending the future junction of good men? Will it not be agreeable to see that, amidst the dismal wreck, our friends have been preserved; and that they are safe landed, after being tossed on the sea of this world, and running numberless risks of being cast away? Will it not give us the highest pleasure to meet among the blessed, those persons for whom, perhaps, we have often sighed and trembled; or to find, that instead of being numbered among the lost and miserable, our earnest wishes for them have been answered, that they have acquitted themselves well in life, and *chosen that good part which will never be taken from them?*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It may be proper, on this occasion, to think of the place where we shall hereafter join our virtuous friends. We shall meet them in the realms of light; *in that city* which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* We shall see them again in those new heavens and that new † earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, into which nothing that defileth, or that loveth or maketh a lie, shall be admitted †; where all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes, and pain and death and sorrow shall be known no more ||; where nature will shew us its most glorious face, and order, peace and love reign in full perfection for ever.

But one of the particulars that most requires our notice here is, that our friends will then have lost their present weaknesses. They will not then be such frail and helpless beings as we now see them. They will not be liable to be insnared by temptations, or ruffled by unreasonable passions. They will not be hasty in their judgments, capricious in their tempers, or narrow in their opinions. Every wrong bias will be taken from their wills, and the imperfections, which now render them less amiable, will be removed. Our hearts shall never more ache for their troubles, or feel anguish on

* Heb. xi. 10.

† Rev. xxi. 27.

‡ 2 Pet. iii. 13.

|| Rev. xxi. 4.

their account. They will be past all storms, cured of all follies, and eased of all pains. They will appear in finished dignity and honour, after the education and discipline of this world, and be endowed with every excellence which we can wish them to have.—What pleasure will it give to meet them in these circumstances? How delightful will be our intercourse with them when they, together with ourselves, shall be thus changed and improved?

Once more. In the future world, there will be no such painful separations from our friends as we now suffer. It can scarcely be said that we have in this life, more than just time enough to begin friendships, and to feel the pangs of sorrow that attend the dissolution of them. But, in the heavenly state, we shall feel no sorrows of this kind. Our friends will be *immortal*. Our happiness in them will be liable to no abatements from the sad apprehension of being soon parted from them, and seeing them sink under decay and sickness. We shall never be witnesses to any such shocking scenes as their expiring agonies. The cruel hand of death will not be able there to reach them, and to tear them from our embraces*. They will flourish
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* “ Who would not (says Socrates in his Apology) part with
“ a great deal to purchase a meeting with *Orpheus*, *Hesiod*, *Homer*,
“ &c. ? If it be true that this is to be the consequence of death,

“ I would

in eternal health and vigour, and be with us *for ever with the Lord*. Such are the circumstances that, we may imagine, will contribute to the joy attending the future junction of virtuous men in the heavenly state. I cannot help adding the following reflexions.

First, What I have been saying has a tendency to increase our satisfaction in our friends. The prospect, in general, of a future state, must have a most friendly influence on our present enjoyments. What, indeed, is human life without such a prospect? What darkness rests upon it, when we consider it as no more than a passing shadow, *which appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away*; or, as a short period of tumultuous bustle and uncertain happiness diminished by many vexations, with an infinite blank before and behind it? Such a view of life deprives its pleasures of their relish. It is enough to chill all our thoughts, and to break every spring of noble action within us.

But if, in reality, this life is only an *introduction* to a better life, or the feeble *infancy* of an existence

“ I would even be glad to die often. What pleasure will it give
 “ to live with *Palamedes* and others, who suffered unjustly, and to
 “ compare my fate with theirs? What an inconceivable happiness
 “ will it be to converse, in another world, with *Sisiphus*, *Ulysses*,
 “ &c. especially, as those who inhabit that world shall die no
 “ more? — Και ήδη τον λοιπον χρόνον αθανάτοι εσιν; υπερ γε τα
 λεγομενα αληθή εστιν. Socr. Apol. apud Plat.

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that shall never end, it appears with unspeakable dignity; it has an infinitely important end and meaning; all its enjoyments receive an additional relish, and the face of nature will shine with greater beauty and lustre. In particular, the consideration of the circumstance relating to our future existence on which I have been insisting, will communicate new joy to all our present *friendships*. The reflection on our friends as heirs with us of the same blessed immortality, as persons whom we shall meet in the regions of heavenly bliss and live with for ever, must cheer our minds in all our intercourse with them, and cause us to look upon them with the highest affection and delight. But, to consider them as only beings of a day, who are to perish in death we know not how soon; How uncomfortable is this? What a damp must it throw over our friendships? How difficult must it be for persons, who have any tender feelings, to think, without distress, of agreeable connexions which they see will end in a speedy and final separation; or, of valuable friends, all whose valuable qualities are, in a little while, to be wholly extinguished, and whom they are just going to lose for ever? The more agreeable the connexions are, the more distress must such apprehensions create; and the more valuable our friends, the greater reason will there be for pain.

But,

But, suppose what has been asserted in this discourse ; suppose, that our present connections are to be renewed hereafter, that we are again to see those valuable persons who are gone before us from hence, or, that the friendships which now take place between worthy men, are only the beginnings of an union of minds, that will be continued and perfected in the heavens : Suppose this, I say, and all will be triumph. We shall have abundant encouragement to cultivate friendship. The view of death will have a tendency to increase, rather than damp the pleasures attending it. The addition of a good friend or relative will be the addition of one, who will share with us in the joys of immortality, who will enter with us into the city of the *living God*, and be our everlasting companion in glory.

'Tis natural to remark further on this occasion, how important it is that we cultivate only virtuous friendships. Cicero has observed, with the highest reason, that all friendship ought to be founded in virtue. There is certainly nothing else that can make it safe, lasting and happy. It is its cement, life, joy and crown. There is no other permanent foundation of love, or bond of union between reasonable beings. But there is nothing much better fitted to shew the importance of virtue in friendship, than the subject now under our consideration. How shocking must it be to believe, that

that our dearest intimate is one whom we cannot expect to see hereafter in bliss, one who wants the love of the Deity, and who is hastening fast to everlasting punishment? How can any person think of having in his bosom an enemy to the order of the world, and a child of perdition and ruin? With what pain must an attentive person look upon such a friend, and what concern must he feel for him? On this account, were irreligious friends to allow themselves time enough for reflection, they would necessarily be the causes of the greatest trouble to one another. Did they duly attend to their own circumstances, the danger they are in, the precariousness of life, and the nearness of the time when they shall be separated, never again to meet, except in that world where joy is never known, and hope never comes; did they, I say, properly attend to these things, they would surely be incapable of bearing one another; their love would be turned into anguish, and their friendship into horror. Let us then avoid, as much as we well can, becoming intimately connected with any, except the virtuous and worthy. Let us resolve to cultivate friendship only with those whom we may hope to be happy with *for ever*.

In the next place. It is a very obvious observation on the present subject, that it affords the best consolation in a time of grief for the death of friends. It is, I think, very credible that death is

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an event, for which, such creatures as we are, might not at first be designed. It looks like a break in our existence, attended with such circumstances as may well incline us to believe, that it is a *calamity* in which we have been involved, rather than a *method of transition* from one state of existence to another, originally appointed by our creator and common under his government. This, the scriptures declare plainly to be the real fact: But then, it should be remembered, that the same scriptures inform us further, that we have a great deliverer, who came into the world, *that we might have * life*; and who, *by death has destroyed death and him who had the power of death, and obtained for us everlasting redemption.*

The dark and dreary grave, therefore, has now nothing in it that should make it appear terrible. To virtuous men, it is no more than a bed of rest till the morning of a joyful resurrection. We have, as christians, something better to support us under the anguish produced by the death of friends, than the cold alternative of the antient philosophers, that either they are happy, or returned to the state they were in before they were born. We may exult in the expectation of finding them again, and renewing our friendship with them in a better country. The worst that death can do, is to cause

* John x. 10.—Heb. ii. 14.—ix. 12.

a short interruption in our intercourse with them ; or to remove them from our sight for a moment : We shall soon follow them, be raised up with them to a new life, and take possession with them of an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away**. Such are the hopes which the blessed gospel gives ; and well may they elevate our minds above these scenes of mortality, dry up our tears in every season of sorrow, and inspire us always *with joy unspeakable and full of † glory*. The whole effect which the inroads made by death among our friends, should have upon us, is to render us more diligent in religious virtue, and to quicken us to greater zeal in endeavouring to secure a meeting with them and with all worthy men hereafter. It should belong only to those, whose regards are confined to this world and who have no hope, to be inconsolable on such occasions.

Once more: I would observe, that the expectation which virtuous friends have of being compleatly happy together hereafter, furnishes them with a very important direction for regulating their present behaviour to one another. They should maintain in their whole deportment, that purity and dignity which become so high an expectation. They should endeavour, by their examples and admonitions, to excite in one another an earnest ardor

* 1 Peter i. 3, 4.

† 1 Peter i. 8.

to excel in every worthy quality, and watch continually over one another, least, through the indulgence of any failures, they should lose future bliss, and come to be eternally separated from one another. Their views ought to be directed always to the heavenly state, and their whole concern should be so to live and converse together, as to secure a joyful meeting there.

The pleasures of society and friendship are some of the greatest we are capable of. It is not credible, that there is any created intelligence that enjoys a happiness which is independent of all social correspondencies and connexions. A state wholly solitary must want many of the principal sources of bliss. It appears dark and desolate, and cannot admit of the exertion of some of the noblest powers of reasonable beings. Friendship therefore, in all probability, is everlasting and universal in the rational creation, and will make a part of our happiness in every future period of our existence. The consideration of this has a tendency to raise our ideas of its value, and should engage us to be anxious about so acting in this relation now, and so improving its blessings, as that we may go from hence properly qualified for the more noble and exalted friendships of another world. How noble and exalted these will be, it cannot enter into our hearts to conceive. It is impossible to look forwards to them with lively faith and attention, without

out feeling an alacrity and elevation of mind, not to be produced by any other cause. Let us, before we dismiss this subject, fix our thoughts here a moment, and recollect some of the observations which have been made.

It gives us, in the present life, a pleasure of the highest kind, to converse with wise and worthy men amidst all our present imperfections, and notwithstanding the certain prospect of being in a little while parted by death. What then will it be to join the general assembly of the great and good in the heavens ; to be restored there to those who are now the desire of our eyes and the joy of our hearts ; to converse with them when freed from every weakness and adorned with every amiable quality, and to make a part of the glorious company of Christ's faithful followers at his second coming ? What will it be, not only to have our present friendships thus perpetuated, but to commence new ones with superior beings ; to live and reign with the Saviour of sinful mortals, and to be for ever improving, with all the virtuous part of the creation, under the eye and care of the Almighty ?

We are now frail, feeble, ignorant and helpless. We think, we speak and act like children ; but, in a little time, we shall be advanced to a more perfect state, and receive our complete consummation in soul and body in everlasting glory. Soon the darkness of this world will vanish, every weight will
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be removed from our aspiring minds, our highest faculties gain full scope for exertion, and unclouded endless day dawn upon us. We shall be brought to the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to God the judge of all. We have latent powers which it may be the business of eternity to evolve. We are capable of an infinite variety of agreeable perceptions and sensations, which are now as incomprehensible to us, as the enjoyments of a grown man are to an infant in the womb. Our present existence is but the first step of an ascent in dignity and bliss, which will never come to an end. How amazing and extatick this prospect? What shall we some time or other be? But let us take care to remember the truth, which, in this discourse, I have all along kept in sight. Let us not forget, that none but persons of righteous lives and characters have reason to rejoice in these views. The workers of iniquity will not *rise* but *sink*. They will be driven from the society of virtuous beings. They will lose infinite happiness, and be cast away for ever. They are nuisances in the creation, and unfit to be preserved; or, according to our Lord's representation, *the tares among the wheat, and when the time of harvest shall come, he will say to his reapers, gather together, first the tares, and bind them in bundles,*
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and burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.*

Would you then make sure of the happiness I have been representing? Would you, when every earthly connexion is broken, obtain admission into a better world, and an union with those you love in the habitations of the just? Would you be able, hereafter, to join your voice to the voices of millions, who, after the long silence of the grave, will break forth into St. Paul's song of triumph, *O grave where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting? Blessed be God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ?* Would you rise to a place on Christ's throne†; or, see the time when you shall look down upon arch-angels? Then avoid vice. Practise true religion. Strive to get above defiling passions, and to grow in every excellent disposition. On this, all depends. This is the only preparation for bliss, and the only way to favour under the divine government. All anxiety, except about this, every human being will soon know to be folly unspeakable. Remember, that if there is such a state of future existence as has been described, there is nothing worth a single thought, compared with making provision for it; and that, conscious of your own dignity, it becomes you to look continually above every thing mortal, and to spurn with disdain

* *Matth. xiii. 30.*

† *Rev. iii. 21.*

at those pleasures, profits and honours, on which the children of this world set their hearts. *Blessed are they who keep the commandments of God, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city**. He that overcometh shall inherit all things. But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

* Rev, xxii. 14.—xvi. 7, 8.

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